

# Sierra Writers

P.O. BOX 1595 GRASS VALLEY, CA 95945

## SANDS HALL WORKSHOP A SUCCESS!

*Thank you Sands Hall, Eunice Banks, and Eskaton for making the Sands Hall Workshop a huge success.*

**Sands Hall Workshop** by Jennifer Owings Dewey

The workshop with Sands Hall was a wonderful challenge to a seasoned writer or a beginner. Hall provided succinct information, clearly stated, regarding “scene making.” Her approach to the information she provided was in the form of a step-by-step evolution of techniques for authors to expand on the importance of characters in all dimensions. She encouraged the use of gesture and the five senses to humanize characters and to give them a strong presence in written pieces of either fiction or non-fiction.

Participants were encouraged to write short stories using two characters and focusing on how to provide the reader with meaningful information about these characters. It was evident that Hall brought out the best in her “students.”

The workshop was offered twice and both sessions were sold out. Hall has an impressive resume and broad experience in all forms of teaching the craft of writing. She has written a novel (*Catching Heaven*, a Random House Reader’s Circle selection). In addition she is the author of *Tools of the Writer’s Craft*, a series of writing essays and exercises.

Hall has won any number of awards for her work, plus she has taught at the Iowa Summer Writing Festival. Her accomplishments are many and it was a privilege to be able to work with her, even if only for a few hours.

### FEBRUARY 2011

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WWW.SIERRAWRITERS.ORG



## OUR BOARD MEMBERS

### **Babette Donaldson, President**

babettedonaldson@sbcglobal.net

### **Carol York, Hospitality**

carol-york@sbcglobal.net

### **Chuck Jaffee, Young Writers Contest**

jaffee@startlets.com

### **Claudine Chalmers, Program**

Coordinator claudecameron@yahoo.com

### **Susan Conlon, Publicity**

sturnercon@sbcglobal.net

### **Lucinda Porter, Newsletter and**

**Webmaster** lucindaporter@yahoo.com

### **Marty Austin, Treasurer**

homebookkeeper@yahoo.com

### **Shirley Zeff, Membership Coordinator**

scookuie@aol.com

## A WRITER'S USEFUL THINGS

Have you visited any great websites for writers? Found must-have software, applications, or tools? Share what works for you.

One of my favorite and most frequently used tools is my **Moleskine Pocket Planner & Notebook**.

This handy item is always with me. I can track my schedule and write notes on the lined pages.

Do you know that you can locate other writers and meeting opportunities by visiting [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com)? If you don't find a group to your liking, you can start your own!

**Freemind** is a mind mapping software much like the bubble system you might be familiar with. It's free to download and use. It's a fantastic program for brainstorming and organizing information. Check it out at [http://freemind.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://freemind.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main_Page)

Sierra Writers thanks **Susan Mone** for the layout and design of this month's newsletter.

## MEMBERS CORNER

*We'd love to hear from you! Tell us what you are working on. Do you have any successes to share? Have you received any encouraging rejection notices?*

To get us started, **Lucinda Porter** reports that she is almost finished with her manuscript. It's a guide to help patients with hepatitis C and the treatment for it.

*Drop us an email to add your news.* [lucindaporter@yahoo.com](mailto:lucindaporter@yahoo.com)

### Welcome New Members

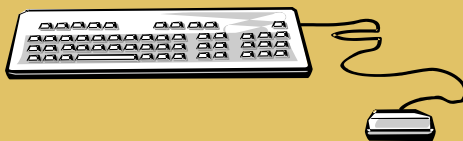
**Robin Martinez Rice** ~ We asked Robin to write something about herself.

*I have lived in Meadow Vista for 26 years, working as a School Psychologist in Placer County. I have two grown children and my husband, Dan, is a veterinarian in Auburn. I decided to reinvent myself in June of 2010, quitting my job and taking some writing classes. The fiction stories I am working on take place in Northern New Mexico (my roots), so I traveled there for five weeks this fall, to write and research. One story takes place in 1940, while the second is in current times. I am pre-published and looking forward to meeting the writers of the Sierra Group, as well as taking part in the critique group. I recognized many names on the member list, people I have met, as well as authors of books I have read or read to my children. I am glad I found the group, after some months of stumbling around on my own.*

**Joanne Brown** ~ To learn more about her, check out Joanne's blog, <http://jayellebee.wordpress.com>

## GET INVOLVED WITH SIERRA WRITERS

*Sierra Writers* is looking for help with the website, special events and whatever interests you. If you are interested in helping, contact Babette Donaldson [babettedonaldson@sbcglobal.net](mailto:babettedonaldson@sbcglobal.net) or Lucinda Porter [lucindaporter@yahoo.com](mailto:lucindaporter@yahoo.com)



**Critique groups** are open to members of Sierra Writers. For information about the **fiction** critique group, contact **Ron Cherry** (530) 478-5616; [romuluswolf@comcast.net](mailto:romuluswolf@comcast.net)

For information about the **nonfiction** critique group, contact **Jan Westmore** (530) 265-0718; [jwestmore@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jwestmore@sbcglobal.net)

**Members may have their own web pages**, which they may use in a variety of ways. Members may use their page to introduce themselves, to link users to information on how to purchase their books, or to link back to their own website. A new feature of the *Sierra Writers* website is a page listing links to our members' blogs. To add your info, contact Lucinda Porter - [lucindaporter@yahoo.com](mailto:lucindaporter@yahoo.com) Check it out at [www.sierrawriters.org](http://www.sierrawriters.org)

# SIERRA WRITERS CALENDAR

## NEXT MEETINGS

*Unless noted otherwise, all meetings are held at the Madelyn Helling Library Community Room 980 Helling Way, Nevada City*

**February Meeting:** Wednesday, February 9, 6:30PM

Featuring **Paul Minicucci** of NCTV - *A Low Stress Method of Writing A Stage Play*

Paul has directed over thirty plays and was artistic director for the New Theater Ensemble in Waltham MA and for the Sacramento Experimental Theater (SET). He has had ten of his plays produced by professional, academic and regional theaters in New York, Boston, Cambridge, San Francisco and Sacramento. He was a playwright in residence in 1982 at the Bay Area Theater festival where his play, *The Rival King* directed by Robert "Woody" Woodruff, received its world premier. Paul's plays have won awards at the American College Film Festival for his play *The Harvest* and received an Elly nomination for his play, *Prime Time*.

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**March Meeting:** Wednesday, March 9, 2011 6:30 PM

Featuring **Jennifer Dewey** - Author, illustrator of many books for young adults, including *Antarctic Journal: Four Months at the Bottom of the World*

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**April Meeting:** Wednesday, April 13, 2011 6:30 PM

**Open Read**

### Opportunity for Members of Sierra Writers

The Small Business & Entrepreneur Fair  
Sponsored by Sierra Commons

At the Historic StoneHouse Restaurant  
107 Sacramento Street in Nevada City  
February 10 from 11:30 am to 3:00 pm

**Sierra Writers will host a table for members at this event.** This is an opportunity to display your books, articles, white papers, business cards or other promotional materials. In so doing, you will help us showcase the talents and diversity of our organization.

Businesses may need your skills creating content for websites, promotional brochures and advertising. Other organizations may need speakers for events.

If you would like to participate, contact Babette Donaldson ([babettedonaldson@sbcglobal.net](mailto:babettedonaldson@sbcglobal.net)) and submit your display item no later than February 4. There is no charge. You do not need to be present but you are welcome and encouraged to come to the event. We have some volunteers at this time and could use two more to be at our table.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

*Details on each event are listed on our website at [www.sierrawriters.org](http://www.sierrawriters.org)*

**THE SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEUR FAIR** - Thursday, February 10, 11:30 PM to 3:00 PM

Location: StoneHouse Restaurant

*This event is free to the public.* The Fair is a benefit for Sierra Commons, a nonprofit providing a host of services to help businesses become viable through free and reduced-cost support services.

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**GOLD COUNTRY SENIORS ALIVE: *Capturing Your Story*** - Free Introductory Classes. All session open to the public.  
Thursday, Feb 3, 3:30-5 Hilltop Commons - Monday Feb 28, 3-4:30 Quail Ridge

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**CREATIVE WRITING CLASSES WITH PATRICIA DOVE MILLER** - Winter 2011, various dates

Location: All classes held at a private Nevada City writing studio. For more information or to register for classes, contact Patricia Dove Miller, [dovepat@oro.net](mailto:dovepat@oro.net), 530-265-5165

**BIRDSONG:** A Writing Practice Group

**CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP:** For all genres

**MOONSONG WORKSHOP:** A Half-Day Of Writing And Meditation

Further information about these classes may be found at <http://sierrawriters.org/events/community-events>

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**Sierra Writers members** may use this newsletter to promote their book, classes, or other workshops. Send information to [lucindaporter@yahoo.com](mailto:lucindaporter@yahoo.com). Organizations that serve the writing community of Nevada County may submit announcements to upcoming events. Send information to [lucindaporter@yahoo.com](mailto:lucindaporter@yahoo.com)

**Deadline for March Sierra Writers newsletter is February 15, 2011**